

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/09/2009
Inspector	Janet Armstrong
Type of setting	Childminder

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder has been registered since 1999. She lives with her husband and two children, a son aged 16 years and daughter aged 12 years in a three bedroomed semi-detached house in Axminster, Devon. The ground floor is used as the main accommodation for childminding purposes. This comprises of a living room and kitchen/dining room. Rest and toilet facilities are available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have two dogs, a cat and hamsters.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children, three of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently four children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range and attend on a part time basis.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and confident in the homely environment provided for them. The childminder is attentive to their care needs and provides them with access to a wide range of activities, although, these are not always well planned to support the children's learning. The children respond well to the childminder's interaction and ideas for activities to engage in. Systems to enable the childminder to monitor her effectiveness are in the very early stages, and as of yet, have not allowed her to action and implement changes to support her in securing future and ongoing improvements to her practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop planning, using the information gained from the children's records of assessment and building on the good range of activities offered to further extend the children in their individual learning
- develop observation and assessment systems to link the children's learning and their identified next steps to the six areas of learning and steps within the Early Years Foundation Stage to help identify children's learning priorities. When sharing these records with parents, consider ways that will encourage them to make comment and contribute towards their children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder provides a safe environment for children to play. She completes daily risk assessments of her home to ensure all the necessary measures are in

place to remove or reduce potential hazards. She supervises them well and helps them to learn about potential risks, such as when on outings, she asks the children to help her identify what might be a danger and why. The childminder has a sufficient knowledge of child protection issues to enable her to take appropriate action should she have a concern about a child in her care.

Generally, children are out and about on a daily basis, visiting local toddler groups, the park and other local places of interest. The childminder uses the space within her home well to meet all the children's care needs. They have access to resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. Play provision is wide and varied. The childminder does not plan for specific, set activities, but follows the children's lead and supports this by adding her own suggestions to ensure they experience a full range of different activities during the day, such as sand play, play dough, cutting, imaginative play and visits to support the children's interests.

Children have a sufficient introduction to help them develop a positive attitude to people's differences. They behave well as they are occupied throughout the day. They receive lots of support from the childminder and learn to play nicely alongside others, through sharing and taking turns. They have access to some resources to raise their awareness of difference and diversity around them.

The childminder has renewed her first aid certificate since her last inspection. She meets with other childminders and professionals which has helped her to ensure that all the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are being met. The childminder has started to read the EYFS documents to raise her awareness and knowledge to support children's outcomes. She has just started to undertake self-evaluation of some areas of her practice that identify some strengths and areas to improve on, such as the need to practise emergency evacuation procedures with the children and updating her safeguarding children knowledge. These self-evaluation systems will allow the childminder to focus her attention and prioritise key areas for improvement.

The childminder works well with parents. She has a range of basic written policies and procedures in place that are shared with parents, outlining her practices. She ensures relevant information is gathered from parents to help her cater to individual needs. Daily discussions and sharing of children's records of assessment means that both parties are well informed and able to work together to give the children a sense of security and well-being. Current systems for sharing children's progress records do not encourage parents to make comments and contribute towards their child's learning journey. The childminder seeks the views of parents to help her tailor her service to meet the needs of individual families. The childminder does not have direct contact with the other early years settings that the children attend but sufficient systems are in place for both parties to share what they know about the children, through the use of written information or passing of messages through the parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are learning to follow some positive healthy and safe practices. When visiting a local park, the children are asked to help the childminder complete a risk assessment. A three-year-old shares the potential hazards they found which included 'glass, grasshoppers, wire, which is sharp and you will cut yourself' and 'swans as we may get eaten!' This helps to raise children's awareness of their own safety and potential risks around them. Children routinely recognise the need to wash their hands throughout the day. They are learning the benefits of healthy eating and enjoy visiting a local allotment to see the different fruits and vegetables being grown.

The childminder supports the children's language development well through discussion and questioning in their play. For example, when role playing with the three-year-old, the child is keen to be the 'lady' and the 'customer' so that they can act out the new situations and experience both roles that have been enthusiastically performed by the childminder. This helps to develop their imagination.

When at the childminder's home, the children's days are based around the toys and play provision they would like to play with. The childminder is on hand to support these choices and make suggestions of her own so that children experience a wide range and balance of different activities. For example, a three-year-old asks for a pair of scissors and magazine so that they can cut out pictures of favourite toys. The childminder supports the children well in their choices, with lots of praise. However, insufficient thought into planning how she can make the best use of the wide range of resources and activities on offer means that she is not able to focus her attention and support, so that all children attending benefit from their experiences and are all sufficiently challenged and making progress in their learning.

The childminder keeps records of assessment for each child in the EYFS. These show a lovely account of the activities the children have enjoyed whilst in her care. She supports these with photographs and a written account of the activity. Next steps identify future activities based on the children's interests. However, the information recorded is not linked to the six areas of learning or steps within to show the progress children are making. They do not successfully enable the childminder to plan and provide relevant activities and support to fully challenge and extend each child in achieving their next steps.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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